expressed the hope that the Kashmir issue would be resolved peacefully through negotiations between Pakistan and India on the basis of international agreements.

(b) The Russian Federation have since conveyed to Government that their position on Kashmir remains the same as that of the former USSR.

Influx of Bhutani Refugees in Darjeeling

2753. SHRI RATNABAHADUR RAI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the influx of refugees from Bhutan to Doars area of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal since the last two years; and

(b) if so, what are the details of steps being taken for the supply of necessary relief to them?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes, Sir. Government are aware of the influx of persons from Bhutan to the Doars area of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal.

(b) Most of these persons are staying with their friends and relatives in the tea gardens/adjoining areas of Jalpaiguri district. Government are not comtemplating the supply of relief to them.

Iranian offer for resolving India Pakistan issues

2754. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Iranian Ambassador to India had offered the good offices of his country to mediate between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir question;

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) whether the Iranian Government have taken any initiative in this regard and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) to (c) Government are aware of some reports in this regard, During bilateral exchanges at various levels, there have been some suggestions from Iranian leaders and officials that Iran was willing to assist with the resolution of India's problems with Pakistan, should this offer be of interest to India. Government have reiterated their cosistent position that all differences with Pakistan are to be resolved bilaterally under the Simla Agreement and there can be no scope for outside or third party involvement of any sort.

New Maritime Strategy Cooperation Plan

2755. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has in the context of the new international equations evolved any Maritime Strategy Co-operation Plan with the Indian Ocean Littoral States with a view to promote national interests;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) if not, what is India's present thinking on this crucial issue?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) to (c) Due to their diversity of perceptions and interests a common maritime strategy or plan amongst the littoral states is not feasible at present. However, government are alive to developments which could affect our maritime and other interests, and, to this and, support cooperative efforts with interested countries in the area.

Compensation to refugees from Bangladesh

2756. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of India have been pursuing the question of settlement of compensation to refugees from erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) with its counterpart in Bangladesh;

(b) if so, what is the progress made in the matter; and

(c) whether the present Government of